

FAM.
JAPAN

HATSUNE

A LITTLE JAPANESE CHRISTIAN



“Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God.”—MARK x: 14.

“The dove came in to him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off.”—GEN. viii: 11.

“Neither did this man sin, nor his parents; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.”—JOHN ix: 3.

A Prayer

O Heavenly Father, I give Thee back the little girl Thou gavest me. I thank Thee for the comfort of her little span of years, and for what her life and death taught me of heavenly things. And more than all, I praise Thee for the sure hope of meeting her again in the pure joy of Thy presence, happy to all eternity in Thy fellowship and hers.

I offer Thee the five loaves and the two little fishes—the sum of her short life's influence. Deign to multiply the offering and let thousands be refreshed thereby. AMEN.

HATSUNE.

HER name was Hatsune Kawai. She was the daughter of the Japanese pastor of the church in the northern capital of Formosa. The church people called her an angel, so sweet she was. They wanted to see how she looked when she cried, but they rarely had a chance. She was only a Japanese girl who had been baptized by the late Dr Geo. Mackay of the Canada Presbyterian Church in Formosa. She was a little missionary from the beginning. Every week fine people would invite her to their homes; they knew the child better than they knew her mother, and she taught her father more religion than all his professors, so he says. Here are some glimpses of her dear life, short in years (1898-1905) but as long as eternity in influence.

Once, when she was three years old, her mother was ill. Her father was going away to preach. The child begged to go. "You may if you will not cry at night." She was left alone in the hotel while her father was out. When he returned he found her with her hand on the veranda railing, looking wistfully at the sky. "Hatsune, what are those drops in your eyes?" "Oh, I was just thinking of mamma, and I'm afraid she is worrying about me."

She used to go once or twice a month with her father even to the neighborhood of the villages where the savages live, proud to be of help in his work, which she rightly thought the most beautiful and noblest in the world. She wanted to be an evangelist, like her father.

Japanese girls in Formosa fear the Chinese very much, because it is commonly said among

the Japanese that the wicked Chinese steal their children's things and even kidnap the children themselves. When they see a Chinese coming they will cry. Hatsune feared them too, but with those she knew to be Christian she would play and go anywhere with perfect confidence.

Once, when at dinner, Hatsune got a bone in her throat. She went with her father to the hospital, but the doctor could not get the bone out. They went to another hospital, but because she feared the new doctor would fail, too, she cried and refused to open her mouth. Her father said, "Hatsune, if you are such a coward you can never be an evangelist." She stopped crying, shut her eyes, opened her mouth, and soon the bone was out.

There is a very beautiful place near the seashore in southern Japan where many rich people and people of rank from Tokyo go every summer and winter. This place is called Hayama. There is a summer school there every year. Hatsune went there once with her mother, who was ill. Now the little girl was very fond of Sunday-school, but there was no Sunday-school at Hayama. So Hatsune began to pray morning and evening that there might be a good big Sunday-school there. Her father sent some Sunday-school cards from Osaka. Every Saturday she went to the houses where there were children and asked them to come. Thus she gathered a large number, and her mother taught them. As the school got bigger and bigger, two Bible teachers, Mrs Osada and Miss Tanaka came down from Yokohama. She felt that God had sent them to help her. A year later, when her father came up from Formosa, he found a Sunday-school of from fifty to sixty boys and girls, with the little organizer one of its pupils.

On the way back to Formosa the family stopped to see the Osaka Exposition, Hatsune's grandmother being one of the party. The grandmother, 71 years old, was an earnest Buddhist. Every morning before breakfast she would read a portion of the Okyō (the Buddhist book). She did not understand Christianity, because she would not listen to her son's explanation, nor would she go to church. Hatsune understood very well her parents' anxiety that the grandmother might be saved. At Osaka the little girl urged her so to go to church that the old lady had not the "courage to refuse," and for a while she heard the gospel daily. On one occasion the little evangelist was telling her the Bible story when the grandmother exclaimed, "You are a wise little girl, Hatsune!" "Not only I, but all who know the Heavenly Father and Christ are wise," replied the child. "You took me to church and there I heard the gospel. Now I, too, know the Heavenly Father," replied the grandmother. The little girl opened her eyes wide. "If you know Him you may be baptized by papa. I will go and get some water." So real to the child were the things of God.

When Hatsune's father left his mother she said to him: "I have been surprised at the faces of your Christian friends. They have a certain light in them; it comes not from any adorning but from within. I shall enjoy attending church at home now."

Last summer Hatsune and her father had the great joy of having the grandmother request baptism.

Last year, when Hatsune was visiting at the house of the Chief Secretary of the Formosan Railway Department, the wife of the Chief Engineer called. The conversation

turned on tobacco and drink. Instantly an expression of disgust came over Hatsune's face. "Don't you approve of wine and tobacco, Hatsune?" "Of course not; no lady can approve of such things." "They are good things," said the lady, to lead her on. "Why do you use them?" "Yes—sometimes." "Then you are not a Christian; I don't like people that are not Christian." Then the lady asked Hatsune to come to see her, but the girl was unwilling. The lady went out and got some nice foreign cakes. "If you will come to me you may have these," but the girl held back. Once more the lady tried to win her; she had the maid bring in a beautiful big doll and various things made of gold and silver. "Come to me and you may take your choice." But Hatsune was firm and would not sacrifice her principle.

On her birthday her mother gave her a *yen* (50 cents) to spend as she wished. "How will you spend it? Will you buy something with it?" "No, mamma; I want to give it to some poor sick people." That afternoon her father took her to some poor hospital and gave the money to the doctor. The doctor led them to two large wards, telling the patients of Hatsune's gift and adding, "I will use this money to buy for you stamps and postal cards, with which you can send home your New Year's greetings." The patients were deeply touched and bowed their thanks.

Such a one was our little missionary, not a very old missionary, but old enough to know God her Father and His Son her Saviour—faithful, prayerful, loyal and brave, happy little Christian; but the Lord had need of her. She fell ill of diphtheria in Tokyo about the same time her father was suffering from the same disease in New York. The father was

healed, but the little daughter was to die. For a week she lay there smiling, moving her head now and then towards her mother to ask some question about the faith, and then she went where questions become answers and faith gives way to vision. The little evangelist could not preach here as she had wished, but she, being dead, yet speaketh. Yet not dead; more alive rather than the so-called living. She is full of happiness and song, face to face with her Lord.

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